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SECOND VIDELA-PINOCHET SUMMIT POSTPONED

PY250113Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0105 25 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan--It has been learned from official sources that the governments of Argentina and Chile have mutually agreed to postpone until a date to be announced the meeting which Presidents Videla and Pinochet were going to hold this week.

NEW PRC AMBASSADOR CALLS FOR TRADE INCREASE

PY231245Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1430 GMT 21 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Jan--Hsu Chung-fu, the new PRC ambassador to Argentina who arrived here today, said he believes that future expansion of trade relations with Argentina will represent an important factor in relations between the two countries.

At Ezeiza Airport, Ambassador Hsu was welcomed by D. Saaad Tarique, Pakistani ambassador; Juan Carlos Katzenstein, Foreign Ministry protocol director; and members of the PRC Embassy.

I bring feelings of friendship from the Chinese people for the Argentine people, said Hsu, who added: I hope that the efforts of the Argentine people and government to achieve prosperity are successful.

In conclusion, he said that the basis for stronger trade relations with Argentina is already established and that he will help strengthen ties between the two countries.

LAIDLAW SWORN IN AS PLANNING MINISTER

PY232317Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2230 GMT 23 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 23 Jan--President Jorge Rafael Videla swore in Gen Carlos Enrique Laidlaw today as the new planning minister. The ceremony was held in the White Hall of the Government House at 1700 with the attendance of Adm Emilio Eduardo Massera, the navy commander; Lt Gen Orlando Ramon Agosti, the air force commander; and other national officials.

INTERIOR MINISTRY RELEASES FIGURES ON ARRESTS

PY202358Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2056 GMT 20 Jan 78 PY

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 20 Jan--The interior minister reported that between 13 January and today, 46 persons have been arrested and placed at the disposal of the executive branch while 10 persons have been released.

6TH DIVISION CHIEF DENOUNCES TOPATER GROUP

PY202123Y La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 14 Jan 78 P 4 PY

[Text] Trinidad, 13 Jan--Col Luis Garcia Meza Tejada, commander of the 6th Division which is quartered in Trinidad, said that the statement of the high-ranking armed forces officers who passed to active reserve "is only the fruit of ambition, selfishness and political opportunism, improper for men who have held high-ranking positions within the armed forces." The officer reported that the entire headquarters repudiated the call made by "those who until recently were the most loyal and unquestionable collaborators of General Banzer and the Government of the Armed Forces." He said that the statement issued under the misnamed "Topater" entity is designed to cause confusion and division within the ranks of the Bolivian Armed Forces. Col Garcia Meza added: "It is appropriate to remind them that when they were at the peak of their military careers, whether at ministries or in key positions in security agencies or in command institutions or those of higher military studies, they taught that institutional unity was the main thing to watch for, and that this is precisely the thinking of the armed forces, be it that of a humble soldier or of a general." That is why, according to the 6th Division commander, the statement issued and published by the signatories of the "Topater" group has caused a sad impression among the officers of the headquarters in Trinidad.

LEADERS OF VARIOUS MNR FACTIONS IDENTIFIED

PY202059Y Sucre Radio La Plata in Spanish 1630 GMT 20 Jan 78 PY

[Text] The press emphasized today that there are seven factions within the National Revolutionary Movement [MNR] headed by various persons. Among these groups, the one led by Guillermo Jauregui and Leonidas Sanchey is mentioned. There is also the splinter group of Guillermo Fortun, Raul Lema Jr, (Ronald Monje), (Alfredo Franco) and (Pedro Rivera) who are said to have close links with President Banzer's government. Then there is the group led by Ruben Julio Castro with (Ciro Humboldt) as his deputy. Finally, there is the group headed by Jaime Arellano. In a press conference, (Jorge Rios Daman) said that Walter Guevara Arce, leader of the Authentic Revolutionary Party [PRA], will not be able to return to the country yet, because he has an important post in the Venezuelan Government.

PRTB DENIES UNITY OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

PY231322Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1648 GMT 21 Jan 78 PY

[Text] La Paz, 21 Jan--In a communique published here today the Bolivian Workers Revolutionary Party [PRTB] denied that there is unity among Bolivian leftist parties. The PRTB is the political branch of the National Liberation Army [ELN] formed by Ernesto "Che" Guevara in 1967. The communique issued by the PRTB, which was founded in 1972, notes that "the popular and working forces, the democratic sectors of society and all the revolutionary organizations are not uniting." Experts noted that the foundation of the PRTB marked the transition of guerrilla action into popular political agitation in Bolivia. The PRTB is willing to carry out a political opposition struggle against the military government through "a wide resistance movement by combining legal, semilegal and clandestine organizations."

NUCLEBRAS PRESIDENT DISCUSSES URANIUM ENRICHMENT

PY241635Y Aparecida Radio Aparecida in Portuguese 1430 GMT 24 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Brasilia--NUCLEBRAS President Paulo Nogueira Batista has said that President Geisel's visit to the FRG this year will have great significance. According to Nogueira, ratification of all the nuclear agreements signed between the two countries will give Geisel's March visit special significance. Nogueira Batista said that Brazil may even become an exporter of enriched uranium beginning in 1985. During the first 6 months of 1979, the first uranium processing and enriched plant will go into operation in Pocos de Caldas, Minas Gerais, said Nogueira. He also added that Brazil will not run any risk in processing plutonium, since this is provided for under the Bonn-Brasilia agreement. The only imports Brazil will make will be 300 tons of uranium from South Africa to operate the Angra I Nuclear Plant, and all Brazilian uranium needs will be supplied by our uranium reserves beginning in 1979, said Nogueira. Brazilian uranium will be enriched in the Netherlands until Pocos de Caldas is completed.

CHAMBER HEAD DISCLAIMS PRESSURE FOR FIGUEIREDO

PY251419Y Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 24 Jan 78 p 3 PY

[Excerpt] Recife--Deputy Marco Maciel, president of the Chamber of Deputies, said yesterday that he is not aware of any pressures by the ARENA leadership regarding the endorsement of Gen Joao Batista de Figueiredo as candidate to succeed President Ernesto Geisel. He said: "I feel, however, that it is legal and even desirable to mobilize the whole party toward a broad demonstration of the party's affirmation at the upcoming national ARENA convention to approve the name of Gen Joao Batista de Figueiredo."

According to Maciel, the task of the leaders is as follows: To guide the party, especially now that it is preparing to make great decisions, at different levels of activities. He added: "This will also serve to reaffirm ARENA's support and confidence in President Geisel and show once again that the party will be able to carry out an excellent electoral campaign this year."

Regarding rumors of possible changes of the Falcao law, Maciel stated that he is not aware of any measure to amend this law and that he is convinced that "it is a groundless rumor." Maciel added: "It is well known that the reform being thought of now, and which is being prepared by Senator Petronio Portella, will be based on the constitution."

TWO PRISONERS FREED ON HABEAS CORPUS REQUEST

PY241723Y Aparecida Radio Aparecida in Portuguese 1430 GMT 24 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Adm (Elio Ramos de Azevedo), president of the Superior Military Court, granted a habeas corpus request yesterday for two political prisoners still in jail serving their prison terms. The prosecutor had asked for an extension of their prison terms, but although the military court was in recess, its president granted the habeas corpus request from their doctor and lawyer.

PRESS OPTIMISTIC ON CHANGES FOR BEAGLE AGREEMENT

PY2317247 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1627 GMT 21 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Santiago, Chile--Local press editorials expressed optimism today at the possibility that the Chilean and Argentine presidents may solve the southern border dispute when they meet again next week somewhere in southern Chile.

The government newspaper EL CRONISTA stated: "It can be said that the next meeting between President (Augusto) Pinochet and President (Jorge Rafael) Videla will have in its favor notable advantages: In the first place, the cordiality of the Mendoza meeting and its results; in the second place, the evident moderation and calm which most of the Argentine press has fortunately assumed." EL CRONISTA added: "The path is open for renewed efforts to achieve what will probably be an agreement regarding the demarcation of maritime spaces in the southern region of the continent."

LA TERCERA DE LA HORA stated that "the Mendoza meeting was the first step. The next will be a definitive meeting at which, it is perfectly correct to hope, specific results will be achieved which will favor the two countries."

The influential newspaper EL MERCURIO discussed friendship, and particularly noted the British crown's attempt to solve the dispute by establishing the course of the Beagle Channel north of the three main islands in the area. According to Buenos Aires government sources, Argentina will reject the decision on the grounds that it has historical and legal errors and errors in evaluation. EL MERCURIO stated: "A civilized country like Argentina cannot disregard an award of this nature, much less declare it nullified, ignore its implications or overlook its obvious and permanent consequences." It added that "the Beagle decision is not everything in the political, military, economic, cultural and social relations between Argentina and Chile. The moral and physical integration of the two nations will not be upset by any problem, no matter how difficult." EL MERCURIO indirectly criticized Adm Emilio Massera's attitude before the presidential meeting in Mendoza: "It is true that a distinguished member of the government junta of our sister nation believed that the situation between our nations had reached the point where it had to be solved through force, mobilizing Argentina's fleet with the thought perhaps that our small country can be intimidated when its rights are threatened by force." EL MERCURIO added: "Nothing could be more counterproductive to peaceful and normal solution of an issue than a display of this nature. We are certain that responsible Argentine public opinion and leaders are far from agreeing with this display of navy tactics."

VENEZUELA DENIES RECEIVING THREE NEW ASYLEES

PY2417197 Santiago, Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 24 Jan 78 PY

[Text] Venezuelan Ambassador Enrique Aizpurra Ayala has denied that there are any new asylees at the Venezuelan Embassy. He noted that reports of three new asylees are not true. The ambassador said: I have investigated the situation myself and I can confirm that there are no asylees at the embassy.

A newspaper reported that three persons evaded the carabineros surveillance and jumped the walls surrounding the embassy to request political asylum.

The ambassador noted that the embassy guards could attest that there are no asylees at the residence, located at (?Quito) and Pedro De Valdivia Streets.

TEXT OF LAW PROHIBITING NEWS COVER

PY201214Y Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 19 Jan 78 PY

[Law No 117 issued in Santiago, Chile by the Metropolitan Region and San Antonio Province Emergency Zone Office]

[Text] In view of Article No 24 of Law No 12,927 regarding government security, and whereas:

1. The public was informed of a series of actions which were evident violations of the political recess and attempts to alter public order;

2. It is the duty of the government to guarantee the normality of national activities which allow citizens to coexist peacefully and which allows the achievement of national unity;

3. Several mass media reports, far from meeting these objectives, gave the above information unfavorable sensationalism;

It is hereby decided:

1. To prohibit the mass media from reporting any contradictory reports, rebuttal, criticism, statements, press manifestos or communiques on the following issue:

Anything related to action taken by the authorities regarding the detention, transfer and places of detention of the following persons: (Andres Aywin); Guillermo Yunge (Bustamante); (Ignacio) Balbontin (Arteaga); Georgina Aceituno (Saavedra); Juan Sepulveda (Maldran); Hernan Mery (Toro); Belisario Velasco (Barahona); Juan Reyes (Saldia); Elias Sanchez (Cabeza); Enrique Hernandez (Andrade); Tomas Reyes (Vicuna); and Samuel Astorga (Jorgeda).

It is also prohibited to report about the judicial proceedings against these persons.

2. Violation of this law will give precedence to enforcement of Article No 24, Law No 12,927.

Signed: Brig Gen Hector Orozco Sepulveda, acting commander of the Metropolitan Region and San Antonio Province Emergency Zone.

SIX SUSPECTED EXTREMISTS DETAINED INCOMMUNICADO

PY211246Y Santiago Chile Radio Mineria Network in Spanish 0930 GMT 21 Jan 78 PY

[Text] The head of the 3d Military Attorney's Office, (Emilio Tovar Carrasco), ordered six suspected extremists arrested yesterday by security forces and held incommunicado at disposal [of the executive branch], charged with violating the state security laws and carrying weapons. The decision affects the mistress of (German Cortes Rodriguez), a MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] member who was killed during an encounter on 18 January in the La Florida barrio; (Bernarda Santovich Diaz), mother of a 6 and 1/2-month-old baby, detained at her home at 9192 (?Estados Unidos) St in La Florida; (Miguelina Figueroa Duran) and her children (Aura Vinto) and (Ambrosio Figueroa), who were arrested at their home at 1414 San Francisco St during the last 24 hours; (Jose Aurelia Noce Quevedo) and her daughter [name indistinct], arrested at Apartment F, 10 Goyeneche St, La Cisterna, (?where) extremist (Gabriel Oscar Viveros) was killed on 16 January. These six, placed incommunicado in the women's jail and [name indistinct], were arrested by security forces after a broad investigation order was issued by the 2d Military Attorney's Office in December.

MILITARY ANALYZING REPORTS ON GUERRILLA SUMMIT

PA250259Y Bogota Radio Sante Fe in Spanish 2330 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Bogota, 24 Jan--The National Defense Ministry and the Army Command this afternoon remained silent regarding the guerrilla summit that may be held in Santander in the next few days. High-ranking spokesmen who were questioned this afternoon said that a detailed evaluation is being undertaken of the reports issued during the past few days by the Fourth and Fifth brigades, headquartered in Antioquia and Bucaramanga, respectively, as well as the latest report of the Ninth Brigade, headquartered in Neiva. Once those reports are evaluated, the reports of the F-2 and the Administrative Department of Security will be studied in order to subsequently issue an official statement on the event. However, military observers have said that in locations considered by the military forces to be key sites, security measures have been intensified. Some reinforcements have been sent to some towns and air patrols have been increased.

CTC ASSEMBLY SCORES GOVERNMENT'S LABOR POLICY

PA231940Y Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 20 Jan 78 pp 1, 2-A PA

[Text] Villeta, Cundinamarca, Colombia, 19 Jan--Manuel Felipe Hurtado, acting president of the Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CTC), harshly criticized Lopez Michelsen's labor policy tonight at the inauguration of the CTC's Extraordinary National Assembly. The Assembly was called to analyze thoroughly the situation that resulted from the dismissal of the organization's president, Gustavo Diaz Raga, in November. Among other charges, Diaz Raga was accused of the alleged mismanagement of more than 6 million pesos in official aid. During the 3-day sessions, over 60 labor delegates from all over the country will define the CTC's position regarding the current electoral campaign, the presidential candidates and the rising cost of living. In his speech, Hurtado asked the national executive committee and the regional leaders to conduct their debates in a climate of dignity and mutual respect. He called for labor unity at the national level and noted in this regard that magnificent objectives have already been achieved in the common struggles that the four labor centrals have been waging. He praised the scope of the strike held last 14 September and demanded that the government annul Decree No 2004, which ordered the detention of the labor leaders who participated in that movement and the suspension of juridical persons [personas juridicas]. It also authorized management leaders to dismiss all workers involved in the strike. According to Hurtado, the CTC executive will present a thorough report on Diaz Raga's problem and will insist that he abused the confidence entrusted to him in handling the central's funds. Eight days ago, Diaz Raga was invited to attend the Assembly's discussions and make declarations with regard to his own case. The Assembly must carefully analyze these declarations and if it finds them acceptable, it would have to return Diaz Raga to his post as president of the CTC. Otherwise, the Assembly will have to appoint a new president. Hurtado aspires to obtain this post. Diaz Raga, who was sued by the CTC, has insisted that he is totally innocent of the charges against him. According to Juan Manuel Torres Fresneda, the judge in charge of the case, he has not yet found any reason to order Diaz Raga's arrest, but he has warned that the investigations continue. Hurtado added that in his speech before the assembly he will call for the CTC's reunification, in an open invitation for the federations and unions that left the central and which makeup the so-called Committee for the Restructuring of the CTC to return to its ranks. These organizations separated from the CTC at the National Congress held in October 1976 in Cartagena, after having denounced the alleged antidemocratic and illegal maneuvers of the present CTC leaders.

SANTOFIMIO BOTERO SURRENDERS TO AUTHORITIES

PA232133Y Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1730 GMT 23 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Ibague, Colombia--Alberto Santofimio Boteron, 34 [as heard] years of age, president of the House of Representatives and President Lopez Michelsen's former justice minister, today voluntarily surrendered to the chief of the Administrative Department of Security in Tolima Department, after a judge from Bogota's 11th Superior Court issued a warrant for his arrest. Santofimio Botero is being accused of squandering 9 million pesos by paying salaries of persons working for congress who, it was discovered, did not exist. Two judges who examined the charges considered that the case had merit enough to indict Santofimio Botero and proceeded to order his arrest. This is the first time in the history of Colombia that a president of the House of Representatives has been indicted and sent to prison for common crimes. Santofimio Botero, who is one of the main supporters of Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, Liberal Party presidential candidate, has said that he is innocent and that those work contracts were granted years ago. His lawyers and Turbayist leaders resorted to every means available to prevent Santofimio Botero from going to prison, but last Friday all legal resources were exhausted and the judge from Bogota's 11th Superior Court ruled against a request to revoke the order for Santofimio Botero's arrest. Aside from all this, we are going to have a drawn out process which could last over a year. The district attorney in charge of this case has also ordered the arrest of Santofimio Botero's private secretary, the house of representatives' secretary general and the auditor of the general comptroller's office, all of whom are involved in approving the contracts for the congressional phantom employees. The most varied comments have been made on the legal action taken against Santofimio Botero now that the country has embarked on the political campaign to elect congressmen and the president of the republic. Santofimio Botero, who is a candidate for senator for Tolima Department, will win a seat in congress in the 26 February elections, political observers have forecast. However, the repercussions of this case on Turbay Ayala's presidential campaign still cannot be determined. Turbay Ayala has denounced politics as being behind the promotion of this case. Some liberal newspapers have accused Turbay Ayala of trying to ignore the judicial branch just to save his top political supporter from going to jail. Santofimio Botero could not be transferred to Bogota today due to his physical exhaustion resulting from the tension he has been under for the past few days. Meanwhile, in Bogota, the Justice Ministry today decided that Santofimio Botero will be taken to the Police Academy Prison in Bogota's northwest section and not to the model prison nor the Picota, as some news media had reported in consideration of his position as former minister and, at present, as congressman and president of the House of Representatives. Other prominent figures receiving similar special treatment as being received by Santofimio Botero are: Guillermo Angulo Gonzalez, customs superior tribunal director, and retired Gen Jorge Ordonez Valderrama, former secret police director, both accused of irregularities while in office. The police in Ibague, the capital of Tolima Department, at noon today reported that public order in the department is absolutely normal. Col Alvaro Camero, Tolima Department police chief, said that Santofimio Botero's surrender to the authorities should not cause any problems. He denied that demonstrations or disorders have occurred in Ibague. He said that Santofimio Botero had asked his followers to abstain from causing trouble or promoting disorders. Meanwhile, Tolima Department Governor Cesarco Rocha Ochoa today ordered Ibague and other towns to be placed under special military vigilance in case of incidents or attempts to disrupt public order. Governor Rocha Ochoa said that so far the situation is completely normal in the department and that the measures being implemented will guarantee peace and tranquillity. He also said that there is no reason to prohibit public demonstrations. However, he said that the authorities are prepared to intervene if it is necessary.

VELASCO AIDE ANNOUNCES CREATION OF POLITICAL GROUP

PA241940Y Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 19 Jan 78 p 2 PA

[Text] Gen Javier Tantalean Vanini (Ret) has announced the formation of a political group called Front for Defense of the Peruvian Revolution comprising former ministers who served during the first phase [of the revolutionary government], aides and sympathizers of Gen Juan Velasco Alvarado. Tantalean was interviewed shortly after his arrival in Trujillo. When asked about his political plans, Tantalean announced the creation of the front. The former fisheries minister stressed that the front will not participate in the Constituent Assembly "due to a lack of time." This would seem to indicate that the group has its sights set on 1980.

LABOR MINISTER MEETS SIDERPERU, CGTP WORKERS

FY241400Y Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Jan 78 FY

[Text] The labor minister met yesterday with union leaders from the Peruvian State Iron and Steel Enterprise [SIDERPERU]. During the meeting, in which there was an atmosphere of cordiality, all this enterprise's pending problems were fully discussed. Air Force Lt Gen Jose Garcia Calderon repeated that the government's policy in the labor sector is to always try to overcome problems through dialog.

It was reported that during this meeting and another meeting he held with leaders of the General Confederation of Workers of Peru [CGTP] during the day, workers demanded a labor and political amnesty. Minister Garcia reportedly told the workers that this is not within his jurisdiction and that he would pass on the demand to the interior minister, who must decide on it. Reportedly, it was repeated during the two meetings that the rehiring of workers is being implemented through rules now in force. One person attending the meetings indicated that the minister stated that he will review every particular before final approval for rehiring, to avoid unjust decisions.

SIDERPERU union leaders will meet today, Tuesday, with Maj Gen Gaston Ibanez O'Brien, industry, commerce, tourism and integration minister, since the enterprise is under his jurisdiction.

PCP ANNOUNCES POSSIBILITY OF PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS

PA231745Y Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 14 Jan 78 p 7 PA

[Text] "Despite the campaign of disorientation and disinformation launched by certain press sectors interested in obstructing our path," the Peruvian Communist Party (UNIDAD) [PCP (U)] is in the position to confirm its possibilities of filing in the electoral registry in order to participate in the elections for the constituent assembly.

PCP (U) Secretary General Jorge del Prado affirmed this yesterday, adding that "we have already collected 30,000 signatures in Lima" and hope to exceed the number demanded by the electoral law (40,000) with the lists we will receive shortly from other parts of the country.

During a news conference, Del Prado explained that the PCP (U) is willing to use all the signatures collected for its own filing or for the formation of a democratic, popular and anti-imperialist front capable of defeating "the reactionary parties" on 4 June. According to Del Prado, the PCP (U) currently has 16 departmental committees. In this manner, he explained, we have exceeded the number required by Decree Law No 21995 (electoral law for the constituent assembly), which calls for 12 committees. Elsewhere in the conference, the PCP (U) leader criticized the campaign launched by certain press organs, "which is aimed at isolating the PCP (U) and at preventing it from filling in the electoral registry, thus laying the groundwork for its subsequent outlawing. It is also aimed at separating it from the working class" and seeks to divide the party. The objectives of that campaign have not been determined by circumstantial considerations. "They respond to a strategy by U.S. imperialism and its domestic allies in the face of our country's current situation," Del Prado remarked. He stressed that the popular forces have noticed an increasingly pro-rightwing attitude on the part of the armed forces government, an attitude that is becoming increasingly proimperialist and antipopular. "Cloaked by this situation are the reactionary forces displaced or affected in their political positions by the process begun on October 1968." Del Prado added that those forces are politically represented in the APRA party of Peru, Popular Action (Belaundist) and the Popular Christian Party. According to Del Prado, those forces are on the offensive, supported by clearly reactionary and pro-imperialist tendencies found within the government's apparatus itself. But, he said, they will have to confront the ever increasing strength of the revolutionary and progressive forces. The strength of these forces, he went on, was demonstrated by the 19 July strike, by the joint meeting held at the 2 de Mayo Plaza and at former President Gen Juan Velasco Alvarado's burial. Asked for his opinion regarding the leaders expelled as a result of the most recent developments within his party, Del Prado responded: No party or labor leaders have been expelled. We must discover how that rumor started. Once those responsible are discovered and the origin of that rumor is established, there will undoubtedly be expulsions. In conclusion, he affirmed that "the first priority is to defend party unity, but not unity to conceal errors or to reach a standstill." Finally, he said that talks have been held with several political parties and other organizations to discuss the formation of a democratic, popular and anti-imperialist front.

PCP SECRETARY GENERAL DISCUSSES COUNTRY'S FOREIGN DEBT

PA231557Y Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 14 Jan 78 p 7 PA

[Text] Jorge del Prado, Secretary General of the Peruvian Communist Party (Unity) [PCP (U)], said yesterday that "the refinancing of the foreign debt can still be attempted." Asked about the PCP (U)'s position regarding the moratorium requested by several parties, he said: "We do not discard the convenience of having a moratorium at a certain time." Speaking at a news conference, he indicated that "we must think about what can be changed in connection with foreign support." "We should not exclusively seek financing from imperialism's financial institutions; we should not subject ourselves to the conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund," he commented. Del Prado also said that his party has publicly and repeatedly stated the alternatives available to overcome the country's current crisis. He added that we have mentioned these measures to President Francisco Morales Bermudez as well as the need to promote our country's independent socioeconomic development. "That is a viable platform. It shows that it is not necessary to yield to the pressures of imperialism," the PCP (U) secretary general concluded.

NEW AIR FORCE CHIEF SEES NO POLICY CHANGES

PY231928Y Montevideo Cadena de Oro del Interior in Spanish 1500 GMT 23 Jan 78 PY

[Summary] "New Air Force Commander Raul Bendahan has just stated that his becoming head of the air force will not mean a change in government policies. Gen Raul Bendahan noted that the Uruguayan Air Force will enforce realistic economic and political policies." General Bendahan made this statement shortly after assuming today his air force duties during a ceremony attended by President Mendez and high-ranking military, government and diplomatic officials.

After the outgoing air force commander, Gen Dante Paladini, gave a short speech, Gen Raul Bendahan delivered a speech in which he said that the Uruguyan Armed Forces are protagonists of a decisive period in the history of the nation. He added that "this is a nationalist-minded process based on our strongly rooted traditions and the patriotic union of civilians and military forces. Uruguay, which is again leading its own destiny, despite all adversities, is a country defending its sovereignty, dignity, peace and work since that national process was undertaken on 5 May." Bendahan added that "this change of command is a mere change of men within the government team in fulfillment of the law which thus assures continuity within the decentralization policy."

Answering a question, General Bendahan said that the appointment of a deputy commander "is just another post that is added to our entity but in no way at all does it mean that the chief of staff position will disappear." He added that the appointment of a deputy commander is merely to delegate some air force command duties. General Bendahan also said that as a result of new appointments within the air force command it is most likely that this command will be reorganized.

TEXTILE AGREEMENT WITH EEC SEEN AS BENEFICIAL

PY241921Y Montevideo Cadena de Oro del Interior in Spanish 1500 GMT 24 Jan 78 PY

[Text] The negotiations between Uruguay and the European Economic Community which resulted in a textile agreement have been very beneficial for our country, according to a communique issued midday by the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The agreement regulates the export of about 123 textile products to the European market, and has been in force since 1 January 1978. The communique goes on to explain that no restrictions will be imposed on Uruguayan exports. The agreement establishes the limits within which our country may increase its exports. The maximum limit in most cases if far above the country's present export volume.

BRIEFS

NAVY BUYS OIL TANKER--The navy's new oil tanker arrived in Punta del Este port today with its first shipment of crude oil. This tanker, along with the navy's two other oil vessels, will be able to cover 70 percent of Uruguay's oil transportation needs and save the country a great deal of foreign currency now spent on freight charges. [Montevideo Radio Carve Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 19 Jan 78 PY]

MEP PROPOSES SINGLE LEFTIST PRESIDENTIAL SLATE

PA241803Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 0252 GMT 23 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Caracas, 23 Jan (EFE)--The People's Electoral Movement (MEP) today proposed that all leftist presidential candidates resign in order to set the basis for a single presidential slate in the December elections.

The MEP's proposal was voiced by Party Secretary General Jesus Angel Paz Galarraga, who said at a press conference that the left should group around a single candidate in order to give the people a true alternative to reach power. He added that this proposal calls for the resignation of candidates Jose Vicente Rangel of the Movement for Socialism (MAS), Hector Mujica of the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV), Americo Martin of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) and Luis Beltran Prieto Figueroa of the MEP.

Paz Galarraga explained that after the candidates resign, the leftist parties and groups will start negotiations to elect a single candidate who could be one of those already nominated or a new leftist figure. He added that if a new candidate is to be chosen, MEP would propose writer and poet Miguel Otero Silva, an independent Marxist, former director and one of the owners of EL NACIONAL newspaper of Caracas. He also admitted that MAS candidate Jose Vicente Rangel is the one with most popular backing according to the latest polls, but he stressed that all must make "sacrifices" for the sake of unity.

MEP's proposal has been made within the context of the dialog started at the beginning of this month by leftist parties seeking joint action in the campaign. It is possible that a front will not come about from the talks but efforts are being made in this direction.

So far, the response of the other Venezuelan leftist forces to the MEP proposal has not been revealed. Observers indicate that it may be expected within the next few days.

COMMUNIST PARTY PROMOTES LEFTIST UNITY TALKS

PA250355Y Caracas Radio Rumbos Network in Spanish 2100 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] In order to obtain the unity of the left around a single candidate, one requires a great spirit of sacrifice, patience and revolutionary perseverance. This statement was made by Jesus Faria, secretary general of the Communist Party of Venezuela [PCV]. He made the remark in commenting on recent statements made by the secretaries general of the Movement for Socialism [MAS] and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR] in answer to statements made by the secretary general of the People's Electoral Movement [MEP] concerning the single candidate. Faria said that the candidacy of Hector Mujica is not a problem if the left reaches agreement around a single candidate. We believe that if we do not attain unity in January, we could attain it a bit later, Jesus Faria said. Finally, he said that it is completely inappropriate to hold a public discussion on the single candidacy issue with disparaging and pugnacious remarks and that the MAS, MIR, MEP and PCV must continue this complex process for unity in a positive manner.

HOUSE LEADER URGES MEASURES TO PREVENT 'U.S. ESPIONAGE'

FL242115Y Mexico City INFORMEX in Spanish to ANSA Buenos Aires 2106 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] Mexico City, 24 Jan (ANSA-INFORMEX)--Chamber of Deputies Permanent Committee Chairman Rodolfo Gonzalez Guevara has flatly denied that there is any national representative at the service of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Gonzalez Guevara made the denial when commenting on statements by former Mexican Foreign Secretary Emilio O Rabasa who has maintained that unfortunately there always has been CIA interference in Mexico's domestic affairs. Regarding this matter the leader of Mexican deputies said that the government should adopt the necessary measures to prevent U.S. espionage action in this country.

PEMEX OFFICIAL RULES OUT PIPELINE TO COSTA RICA

FL212133Y Mexico City INFORMEX in Spanish to ANSA Buenos Aires 2120 GMT 21 Jan 78 FL

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Jan (ANSA-INFORMEX)--Jesus Chavarria, Mexican Petroleum (PEMEX) exploitation administrator, has explained that there is no possibility of building a gas pipeline to Costa Rica to supply gas to Central America. Costa Rican President Daniel Oduber intimated this possibility during his visit to Mexico a few days ago. Chavarria said it would not be possible to cover the cost of the pipeline because energy consumption in the Central American region is low.

On another matter, he indicated that it would not be appropriate to sell gas to Western Europe or Japan since the liquefaction of gas entails very high expenditures.

REYES HEROLES DENIES MILITARY POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS

PA161913Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 0448 GMT 16 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 15 Jan (EFE)--Mexican Secretary of Government (Interior) Jose Reyes Heroles denied here today that the military in Mexico seeks to govern or to influence the government. The secretary made this denial during a meeting with Brazilian newsmen who are reporting on Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel's visit to Mexico. Geisel arrived in Mexico City yesterday. The secretary added that the Mexican army is "strictly constitutional and popular, and totally loyal to the institutions."

Asked how Mexico managed to restrict the military to its constitutional functions, the secretary said this was due to the fact that the country has had three different armies since colonial days. Thus, while other Latin American countries, Chile for example, have armies that date back to colonial times, Mexico has changed its armed forces on three occasions. This has helped to make them more loyal and public-spirited [populares], Reyes Heroles said.

For his part, Army Gen Felix Galvan Lopez, secretary of national defense, said that Mexican officers are not inclined toward regimes headed by the armed forces and that the Mexican army "is not and will never be repressive." The general explained, however, that the Mexican army maintains good relations with other armies that are in government. He said that military personnel can become the president of the republic, but only as civilians. Mexican military officers, the general said, "support democratic and constitutional mandates, not military dictatorships."

TORRIJOS REVISES NATIONAL EMERGENCY PLAN

PA210402Y Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 20 Jan 78 PA

[Text] General Torrijos has ordered a reorganization of the emergency plan believing that many of the 20,000 employees appointed by the revolutionary government within the plan [words indistinct]. There should be a more careful check of appointments in order to prevent the truly needy from being treated unjustly and to stop those who just want the 100 Balboas a month for expenses or who want to receive a monthly rent from receiving the benefits. In view of these complaints General Torrijos ordered the following revisions of the program:

1. No one should expect to be appointed prior to the first 4 weeks following his application.

2. A group of 200 social workers, supplied with transportation, will determine the real social situation of the applicants.

3. The program will be managed in such a manner that more work is accomplished, a more rational distribution of appointments is made and training is provided. The ministers office will remain open in Panama City to attend to requests and problems.

4. The minister of ministers will also act as an administrative examiner traveling throughout the country.

5. The minister of ministers, besides performing his regular duties, will have the following basic functions: prevent, analyze and resolve disputes involving administrative oversights, unjust treatment, land problems, undocumented property titles, issuance of personal identification documents, unjust arrests, improper use of authority, abuse of power, lack of coordination between key government sectors and any other duties which may emerge or be assigned to him.

6. The minister of ministers who will begin the administrative examination next week will be Ricardo Rodriguez, and he should work in Chorrera from Monday to Wednesday and in Chiriqui Province from Thursday to Saturday. In this manner the emergency program, which began last December and has responded in a striking manner to the problem of unemployment and to the complaints of the people, will consider more and more the needs of the Panamanian people.

WALLACE FERGUSON APPOINTED PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER

PA241907Y Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1800 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Reliable sources reported this morning that Wallace Ferguson has been appointed minister of public works. Ferguson was serving as deputy public works minister when Nestor Tomas Guerra resigned yesterday. Roberto Lasso has been appointed deputy minister of public works. He was serving as director of the Department of Public Buildings.

LABOR MINISTER SAYS LAW 95 WILL BE EVALUATED

PA240210Y Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2315 GMT 23 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Labor Minister Adolfo Ahumada said today that Law 95 of 1976 will be evaluated after its second year in effect. This evaluation may take place late this year or early in 1979.

Minister Ahumada told a group of foreign and local labor leaders that the government is taking note of the statements concerning the law but has not made any decision on the demands for its derogation.

The labor minister was visited this morning by several leaders of the National Central of Panamanian Workers and representatives of the world labor unions and affiliated organizations from Vietna, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Honduras, the Soviet Union and other countries.

In reply to questions from the visitors, Minister Ahumada said the problem of Law 95 depends on the labor unions' strengths and explained that, in practice, the law has not been applied in some sectors of the nation in view of the pressures applied by labor, such as the case of the banana workers labor union in Bocas del Toro and Puerto Armuelles. Ahumada maintained that Law 95 is a psychological answer to the local businessman, who is a special case and for whom the labor code is like death. Law 95 will not be the end of the labor movement because in evaluating its effects, means will be sought to help the movement, Labor Minister Ahumada concluded.

MISSION SEEKS TO PROMOTE U.S. INVESTMENTS

PA250304Y Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] During the next few days a high-level Panamanian mission will visit key U.S. financial centers in an effort to convince businessmen and bankers that it is good business to invest in Panama. The mission is made up of Panamanian Ambassador to Washington Gabriel Lewis Galindo, Planning and Economic Policy Minister Nicolas Ardito Barletta, Negotiator Carlos Lopez Guevara and other advisers and businessmen.

The mission has held meetings with the members of the Detroit Economic Club in Michigan and will continue its contacts in Chicago and Washington during the rest of this week. The message to the potential U.S. investors will be that Panama is a very good place to invest once the Panama Canal treaties are ratified due to the country's climate of peace and its capacity as a financial center. The opinion of the mission's businessmen is amply shared in Panama and it will not be difficult for U.S. investors to accept it.

NO TRADE ACCORDS WITH EAST EUROPE, SAYS VILLA

PA250337Y Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2315 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Excerpt] Panama will not negotiate any trade agreement with European socialist nations offering this possibility for the time being because it is not convenient for the nation's economic interests. The statement was made by Gustavo Villa, director of commercial treaties and foreign trade of the Ministry of Commerce.

Under the present circumstances, Gustavo Villa said, Panama would be asked for a number of concessions it could not make in view of its current economic situation.

Villa said Panama has received trade proposals from Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Austria.

BELIZE

PRIME MINISTER PRICE GOES TO UK TO MEET WITH OWEN

FL241253Y Belize City Domestic Service in English 0100 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] [Intercepted in progress] The Belizean prime minister, the Honorable George Price, has left today for Great Britain accompanied by his ministers to hold talks with British Secretary of State Dr David Owen.

EL SALVADOR

FOREIGN MINISTER SATISFIED WITH HONDURAS PEACE TALKS

PA241916Y San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1720 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Salvadoran Minister of Foreign Affairs Alvaro Ernesto Martinez has recently voiced satisfaction with the way in which the peace negotiations between El Salvador and Honduras are being expeditiously handled. He said he is very optimistic about this because these two countries, along with the other Central American countries, will profit from the normalization of their mutual relations and of the situation of the Central American Common Market.

HONDURAS

GOVERNMENT ISSUES COMMUNIQUE ON LIMA NEGOTIATIONS

PA241812Y Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Communique issued by the Information Office of the Honduran Foreign Secretariat from Lima, Peru, dated 20 January 1978]

[Text] On 18, 19 and 20 January, 1978, a meeting was held at 154 de Gaulle Avenue, San Isidro, Lima, presided over by Dr Jose Luis Bustamante y Rivero, mediator in the conflict existing between the republics of El Salvador and Honduras, and accredited delegates Arturo Castrillo and Cesar A. Batres, respectively, in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to initiate talks leading to the establishment of a procedure for the mediation process agreed upon in the convention signed by El Salvador and Honduras in Washington, D.C., on 6 October 1976. This convention, in conformity with its own (?provisions), went into effect on 23 November 1977. As a result of the meeting, it was announced that:

A. The mediator has agreed with the parties involved that he will take up his duties on Monday, 3 April 1978, the date on which negotiations will begin with the foreign ministers of El Salvador and Honduras in attendance.

B. The mediator and the parties have determined by common agreement that the site of the negotiations will be the city of Lima, without precluding the right of the mediator to designate other cities for the realization of other activities in the course of the mediation.

C. The mediator and the parties have agreed that all information for the public regarding the process of mediation will be issued in communiques like the present one, and will be released by the mediator at the end of each stage [of the negotiations] or at the end of each meeting.

Delegate Satisfied With Talks

PA241920Y Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1720 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Cesar Augusto Batres yesterday reported to the chief of state and secretary of state for foreign affairs on the preliminary talks held last week with the Salvadoran delegation and mediator Dr Jose Luis Bustamante y Rivero in Lima to determine the procedures to be followed and to choose the site of the mediation office.

When he arrived in Tegucigalpa, Batres said he was very satisfied with the results of the talks.

GUATEMALA

U.S. ENVOY MEETS WITH PRESIDENT LAUGERUD GARCIA

PA241808Y Guatemala City Radio Fabulosa Network in Spanish 1220 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Terence Todman, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, explained President Carter's policy on human rights and aspects of U.S. relations with Latin America during his meeting with President Kjell Eugenio Laugerud Garcia.

Mr Todman also listened attentively to the Guatemalan president's points of view on his domestic and foreign policies. Laugerud did not fail to mention the struggle of the Guatemalan Government and people to recover Belize.

During his meeting with the U.S. official, the Guatemalan president also referred to the most salient aspects of the country's domestic policy, such as the presidential succession [as heard], which has been called for 5 March, and the struggle against the illegal political groups.

Todman said that in addition to exchanging views with Guatemalan Foreign Minister Adolfo Molina Orantes and President Laugerud, he will talk with other Guatemalan sectors, which he did not specify. He was probably referring to those sectors that are participating in the electoral event because anyone of them may reach power in the future. Todman is touring Central and South American countries on a mission entrusted to him by President Carter.

CULTURAL, TECHNICAL AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED WITH CHILE

PA242336Y Guatemala City Radio Fabulosa Network in Spanish 1720 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] For the first time since General Pinochet took over power in Chile, Guatemala will sign cultural and technical assistance agreements with that country. To this end, the Guatemalan Government has invited Brig Gen Enrique Valdes, who will arrive here soon along with the protocol chief, Carlos Costanera, and his private secretary.

The Chilean Government official will sign two agreements within the framework of the policy of cultural exchange and technical assistance carried out by the governments of Guatemala and Chile. However, the specific content of the agreements has not been disclosed.

It has been reported that Gen Enrique Valdes and his party will convey a personal message from General Pinochet to Guatemalan President Gen Kuell Eugenio Laugerud Garcia. They will deliver the message during a meeting that will probably be held at the Presidential House or the National Palace.

This exchange and rapprochement between the Guatemalan Government and General Pinochet's Chilean administration may cause some protest in this country, particularly among those groups that have been displeased with the overthrow of the socialist regime of late President Allende and with General Pinochet's coming to power.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE'S HOME TARGET OF TERRORISTS

PA2121102Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1616 GMT 21 Jan 78 PA

[Excerpt] Guatemala City, 21 Jan (ACAN-EFE)--The home of Col Enrique Peralta Azurdia, the presidential candidate of the anticommunist National Liberation Movement, was machinegunned this morning by unidentified persons in a moving car.

All the windows were shattered by the shots. One of the bullets hit Peralta Azurdia's bedroom. There were no reports of anyone being wounded.

Security forces were immediately sent to the location located in Zone 9 of the capital's south side. An investigation has already begun with questioning of members of Peralta Azurdia's personal bodyguards, who were unable to stop the attack because of the speed with which it was carried out.

NICARAGUA

COSTA RICA'S FACIO ARRIVES, MEETS WITH JULIO QUINTANA

PA2419l4Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 1720 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Costa Rican Minister of Foreign Relations Gonzalo J. Facio, together with trade attache Mr Chan, arrived in this country at 0900. Foreign Ministry reports say that Foreign Minister Facio is currently meeting with Nicaraguan Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Julio C. Quintana.

FURTHER REPORTAGE ON STRIKE OVER CHAMORRO ASSASINATION

Businesses Close

PA2320O4Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 1720 GMT 23 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Lockouts have been declared at construction firms, industries and even several business establishments. All construction firms have staged an indefinite work stoppage at the request of the leading union centrals. The reason is that they want law and police officials to solve the murder of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro once and for all.

A worker of the (Zovite) construction firm in Las Mercedes said he thought that this was a good measure because the facts of the crime have not been revealed. Asked for his opinion of Silvio Pena's remarks last night, the construction worker said he wasn't satisfied with them because what all Nicaraguans want is to know the whole truth.

At the Kativo paint store on the northern road, [words indistinct] everyone agrees that the whole truth has not been revealed and that the lockout is a means to exert pressure over the authorities to get to the bottom of things.

Capital city business has almost completely closed down. Most of the business establishments in Managua began closing early this morning in an attempt to pressure the government to get to the bottom of the killing of Dr Chamorro. El Camino de Oriente, in the eastern part of Managua, closed down completely and other capital city shopping centers have begun to follow suit.

The Chamber of Commerce has not issued any appeal to stage lockouts to demand that justice be administered and has practically refused to make any comments in this regard.

Strike Gains Momentum

PA241630Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 1220 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] Daily activities in Managua, Leon and Chinandega, the country's three most important cities, have been affected by the general strike that has been declared to demand justice regarding the assassination of LA PRENSA Director Pedro Joaquin Chamorro. Foodstuff purchases have noticeably increased at markets and supermarkets, and there are long lines of vehicles at gas stations.

The strike gained strength yesterday afternoon when Managua's commercial sector, where there are over 200 stores, gradually joined it. Urban bus service has been sporadic, especially in the area where the univiersities are located, forcing students to miss classes.

The Democratic Liberation Union has backed the strike declared by the National Strike Committee, expressing th need to render justice in connection with Chamorro's assassination. Labor centrals have also supported the strike. This morning, activities in Managua are almost at a standstill. Few buses are operating.

The National Strike Committee has not set any date for ending the strike.

Somoza's Dialog Invitation Rejected

PA241856Y Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 1551 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Excerpts] [Intercepted in progress] construction workers paralyzed their activities. Today, all construction work in Managua and the departments is at a standstill.

Some commercial activities in the capital closed to the public yesterday. Today, all are closed and so are the banks. In other places of business, service was irregular. This lead to a certain amount of traffic jams in most of the gasoline stations in which drivers opted for [words indistinct].

Another sector affected by the strike is the supermarkets. Obviously, the closing down of certain stores caused [word indistinct] among the public, which reacted by [words indistinct] to buy large amounts of these articles.

The strike also affected cities like Chinandega and Leon. In Chinandega, it was reported that 75 percent of the stores were not open yesterday. The same thing happened in Leon. Today, everything is at a standstill in Chinandega and Leon and also in the departments of Granada, Carazo and Rivas, which borders on Costa Rica.

Meanwhile, university students demonstrated on the main streets carrying posters supporting the strike in addition to demanding justice in connection with the death of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, one of the most valiant newsmen in the nation's recent history.

In the meantime, the government attempted to find the path to settling the conflict with leaders of the Chamber of Commerce of Nicaragua. But it has been reported that management leaders will not attend a meeting with President Somoza.

(?As though there were not enough) irregularities in the various activities, it was reported here today that the strike may spread to other sectors, thus increasing the work stoppage across the nation--that is, spreading to other departments such as Matagalpa, Jinotega, Nueva Segovia and also to the department of Zelaya on the Atlantic Coast.

Representatives of the chambers of industries, commerce and construction will hold an urgent meeting with officials of the Nicaraguan Development Institute to evaluate the situation in the private industry sector in the face of the most recent events. Three representatives of each institution will attend the meeting to seek solutions to the strike called by the workers.

The leaderships of the chambers of industries, commerce and construction yesterday held separate meetings to consider the consequences of the strike to demand justice in the case of the assassination of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro Cardenal.

Meanwhile, the Labor Front [frente obrero], which includes a large number of city workers, issued a communique in support of the strike demanding justice for the assassination of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro Cardenal. However, they are also demanding that management consider the reasons for the strike and pay the workers during the duration of the strike.

Leaders of the Nicaraguan Chamber of Commerce decided during an urgent meeting yesterday to reject, without further comment, the invitation of President Somoza to hold a meeting. The Chamber of Commerce was the only private institution that received the invitation from Somoza. The meeting was to be held on Friday. However, the leaders decided to send a note to Somoza yesterday afternoon turning down his invitation in view of the present situation in Nicaragua. Representatives of the Chamber of Commerce have not published the reasons why they refused to see Somoza on Friday. Today, they will inform the other members of the private sector about the matter.

According to reports received by SERCANO, officials of the construction industry have confirmed that 90 percent of the city's construction sites are on strike. The Chamber of Construction has called a permanent session while it continues to gather information regarding the general strike called by the workers yesterday.

Todman's Visit Postponed

PA250236Y Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2315 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Manuel Espinosa report by telephone from Managua]

[Text] This afternoon, some 80 percent of the commercial and industrial establishments were paralyzed in Managua while a similar situation was reported from other cities in the country--such as Leon, Granada, Chinandega and Matagalpa--where large-scale strikes were reported to have been carried out.

The strike became more evident in Managua in the afternoon when the employees of the two main banks, the Banco Nicaraguense and the bank of America, told bank executives they were joining the strike. A similar occurence took place in other financial firms in the country, which has strengthened the effects of the strike. In the main trade center of Managua, some 112 of the 166 store owners asked the Managua Chamber of Commerce to order the closing of the trade center in view of the unstable situation affecting the sector and to protect the persons and establishments connected to these firms.

This afternoon, the directors of the main private sectors of Nicaragua held a meeting, after which they issued the following communique: The Nicaraguan Development Institute, the Chamber of Commerce of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Construction Chamber, the Chamber of Industries of Nicaragua, the Customs, Storage, and Shippers Chamber of Nicaragua, the Cotton Growers' Cooperative of Managua and the Nicaraguan Organization of Publicity Agencies firmly reiterate their rejection of the disregard of justice that is creating a state of anxiety in the country and express their solidarity with the nonconformity and civic protest of all sectors of the national life that, in a desperate effort to express themselves, have decided to go on a fully justified general strike--a general strike which is gradually gaining greater force throughout the country. In an effort to avoid greater sorrow and anxiety among the Nicaraguan people, we demand justice and state that through peaceful means we shall continue to struggle for the establishment of an order that will guarantee freedom and respect for the citizens' rights. [signed] Managua, Federal District, 24 January 1978.

We just received a report through the U.S. Embassy's Information Office announcing that the visit scheduled for tomorrow by Terence Todman, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, had been postponed in view of the current situation in Nicaragua.

Labor Ministry Communique

PA250418Y Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0330 GMT 25 Jan 78 PA

[Nicaraguan Labor Ministry communique issued in Managua on 24 January 1978]

[Text] In view of the campaign by some persons to instigate a strike in the labor sector, and in view of the concern expressed to this ministry by important labor and management groups, the Labor Ministry believes it is necessary to make the following statement:

1. It is always attentive and ready to face, using all the legal means, whatever situation that might be presented.

2. Any group, either of management or labor, which recommends, promotes or instigates a stoppage of activities does so under its own responsibility, seriously failing to fulfill its main obligation, which is to watch over the interests of its members and prevent them from being harmed.

3. It particularly notes that any employer who follows the recommendation, invitation or instigation to strike does so under his own responsibility, that this should not cause any harm to his workers, and that he is obliged to pay full wages to his workers during the strike he authorizes and record those days as days worked for the purpose of paying the 7th day and any other social benefit.

4. It reminds workers that according to Article 120 of the Labor Code, the refusal to work is abandonment of the job and, like any illegal strike, is just cause for immediate dismissal and the worker loses the right to severance pay, proportional vacations and other rights in accordance with the law.

5. The foregoing is without prejudice to other responsibilities they might neglect as a result of the already mentioned situation.

[signed] The Labor Ministry, Managua, 24 January 1978.

OPPOSITION COALITION FORMED TO OPPOSE SOMOZA

PA241902Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1842 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 24 Jan (ACAN-EFE)--Four of Nicaragua's important political groups joined together today to form a single opposition bloc against Gen Anastasio Somoza's government.

The Democratic Liberation Union (UDEL), the Authentic Conservative Party [Partido Conservador Autentico--PAC], the Social Christian Party and the faction of the Conservative Party headed by Fernando Aguero Rocha announced that they would join forces. For the time being, the main objective of the alliance will be to support a national strike that is being prepared.

The UDEL, which is in turn made up of eight political and labor groups, was headed until last December by newsman Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, who was assassinated here 2 weeks ago.

The group of opposition parties formed today does not include the Conservative faction that is officially recognized by the government.

In its first public statement, the united opposition urged its members to give total support to the strike. The opposition document explains that support for the national strike and for the alliance are needed in order to combat the lack of civil guarantees, the deficiencies of the investigation into Chamorro's assassination, the problem of administrative corruption and political persecution. The opposition group announced that it will struggle--within the framework of permanent respect for human rights--to rechannel Nicaraguan life onto democratic and republican paths. According to the manifesto, the leaders of the allied sectors have agreed to remain in permanent session in order to make decisions with the promptness and efficiency that circumstances demand.

NATIONAL GUARD SOURCES DENY MURDER SUSPECTS EVER AGENTS

PA201631Y Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0330 GMT 20 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Sources within the Office of Laws and Public Relations of the National Guard have declared that Silvio Vegas Zuniga and Silvio Pena Rivas are not now nor have ever been security agents. Certain information media reported that the two Silvios, who are directly implicated in the violent death of Dr Chamorro Cardenal, are investigation and security agents. This unfounded and malicious rumor has now been discredited.

SOMALI ENVOY TO U.S. ADMITS INCREASE IN WESTERN AID

FL242338Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2305 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] The Somali ambassador in Washington has admitted at a press conference that the expansion of arms aid to his country by the United States and its allies is in response to Western strategic interests in the so-called Horn of Africa. The Somali diplomat in the United States admitted that the African country attacked Ethiopia and occupies part of the Ethiopian territory when he indicated that Somali Armed Forces units are located in Ogaden.

Meanwhile, an FRG Government spokesman has reported in Bonn that Somalia has been granted increased financial assistance, which will reach some 40 million marks. A West German delegation will go to Mogadiscio, capital of Somalia, in a few days to make final arrangements for the financial assistance.

Further Report

FL250026Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 25 Jan 78 FL

[Text] The United States, West Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy will meet in London on 31 January to activate their interventionist policy in the so-called Horn of Africa. The meeting, an extension of one that the same five countries held in Washington last Saturday, will be a high-level one. The first meeting of these five NATO-member countries was described by observers as an attempt to internationalize the Somali-Ethiopian conflict.

The same observers have warned that the policy being schemed by the bellicose NATO bloc at these meetings represents a threat for the Ethiopian revolution.

The United States and its NATO accomplices are providing large quantities of arms to the Mogadiscio regime in order to (?strengthen) the aggression against Ethiopia even more. The reactionary regimes of Saudi Arabia and Iran also are acting in complicity with NATO on this anti-Ethiopian strategy.

The Somali ambassador to Washington himself has admitted at a press conference that the expansion of arms aid to Somalia by the United States and its NATO allies is in response to Western strategic interests in the Horn of Africa. The pretext for this strategy is assistance to Somalia to defend its territory and sovereignty precisely when its aggression against Ethiopia and its occupation of part of Ethiopian territory by Mogadiscio regular forces are well known.

NICARAGUAN MAJOR CITIES PARALYZED BY GENERAL STRIKE

FL250041Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 25 Jan 78 FL

[Text] The principal Nicaraguan cities awoke this morning paralyzed by a general strike. The capital city of Managua and the cities of Leon and Masaya are paralyzed by the strike, which was called to demand from the Somoza regime the names of those who masterminded the assassination of opposition journalist Pedro Joaquin Chamorro.

Nicaragua's labor force is slightly more than 600,000 persons--out of a population of 2.5 million--and 50 percent are participating in the strike. Local circles have reported that the strike will coincide with the arrival in Managua of Terence Todman, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, who is touring Central America.

Nicaraguan political and social organizations have repeatedly accused the United States of being the principal supporter of the Somoza dictatorship, which has been enforcing power in Nicaragua for more than 40 years.

For his part, regime chief Anastasio Somoza has held an emergency meeting with his cabinet to adopt measures against the strike; however, it has not been learned what was decided at the meeting.

NICARAGUAN SANDINIST PRIEST ERNESTO CARDENAL ARRIVES

PA241609Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 0338 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Havana, 23 Jan (EFE)--Nicaraguan priest and poet Ernesto Cardenal, a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), arrived in Cuba. Cardenal will act as judge in the annual contest for the Testimonio award which, together with nine other prizes, will be announced here on 12 February.

GRANMA CRITICIZES PROIMPERIALIST GUATEMALAN REGIME

PA241928Y Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 24 Jan 78 PA

[Text] Kjell Eugenio Laugerud, the Guatemalan head of state, has met in Guatemala City with Terence Todman, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs. Todman, who is touring the Central American countries, also talked with Adolfo Molina Orantes, the foreign affairs minister.

In the meantime, GRANMA, official organ for the Cuban Communist Party, has stressed the ties between the Guatemalan regime and the ultrarightist paramilitary groups which operate there with impunity. The newspaper refers to several groups of assassins like White Hand and the Death Squad, which sow terror among the population but against which no action is taken by Laugerud's proimperialist regime.

COOPERATION PROTOCOL FOR 1978-79 SIGNED WITH BULGARIA

FL241640Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1518 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] A cooperation protocol for this year and next has been signed by the Cuban and Bulgarian ministers of light industry--Nora Frometa and Stoyan Zhuleve--at the Light Industry Ministry meeting hall. According to the document, the cooperation will be principally in the fields of shoemaking and textiles. The main points are on information; technical documentation and demonstrations; training; technical assistance, and missions or visits. At the signing ceremony, Nora Frometa said that the same feelings and spirit of friendship which characterize both the Cuban and Bulgarian sides will be present in the fulfillment of the agreement.

CHOMON CHAIRS LAS TUNAS PROVINCIAL PLENUM ON HARVEST

FL241541Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1145 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] A plenum has been held in Las Tunas Province to study concrete measures in response to the call issued by our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro to make up for the sugar harvest delays and reach 100 percent.

In his remarks at the plenum, Province Party First Secretary Faure Chomon stated that the people of Las Tunas have just finished a brilliant demonstration of joy and revolutionary fervor during the ceremony at Puerto Carupano and Fidel's tour through Las Tunas Province. Chomon added that Fidel's visit and remarks stimulate, develop and further the spirit of work, optimism and self-denial with which those of Las Tunas carry out their tasks for the social and economic development of the province. Among the measures proposed by the Las Tunas Province and unanimously approved at the plenum were provincial and municipal plenum meetings to be held with all the political, technical and administrative management responsible for accomplishing the assigned tasks. They also agreed to immediately sign pledges with all sugar harvest workers; with all canecutter brigades; with all collectives that gather, handle and transport sugarcane; and with all harvesting, land restoration, mechanized cultivation and other types of brigades.

ARMED FORCES VANGUARD OFFICERS DECORATED 24 JAN

FL232329Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2302 GMT 24 Jan 78 FL

[Text] Div Gen Senen Casas Regueiro, first vice minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] and chief of the General Staff, as well as member of the PCC Central Committee, this afternoon decorated the 1977 FAR vanguard commanders and officers. The ceremony, which as held at the Granma memorial, was attended by FAR vice ministers, generals and other senior officers.

Div Gen Senen Casas Regueiro presented decorations to four comrades while FAR vice ministers, generals and other officers presented them to the other decorated personnel.

Casas Regueiro made the main speech. In his speech Div Gen Senen Casas Regueiro pointed out that honor in receiving the decoration was much more significant because the ceremony was being held at the memorial where the Granma yacht is exhibited.

Casas Regueiro told the vanguards that the decorations they had just received represent a recognition of the unselfish work they had performed last year in completely carrying out the national and international missions assigned by the party and state. He explained that their role as FAR commanders and officers must be aimed at increasingly improving their knowledge of military equipment and tactics. It should also be aimed at achieving a truly scientific leadership of our activity in the ideological, political and professional fields, the FAR first vice minister added.

Div Gen Senen Casas Regueiro pointed out that it was necessary to have a more in-depth mastery of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. It is necessary to closely link ourselves with the troops and learn their needs and interests. And it is increasingly necessary that you maintain an exemplary vanguard attitude at all times and every minute within our ranks, Casas Regueiro said. This is your role and we are certain that you are going to accomplish it.

Div Gen Senen Casas Regueiro conveyed congratulations to the vanguards on behalf of the PCC, the commander in chief and the FAR minister. We are certain, he said, that you will be equal to the distinction of vanguards in combat training and whenever necessary.

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